U.S. Department of Education
2013 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program
A Public School - 13NJ10

	Charter	Title 1	Magnet	Choice
School Type (Public Schools):	☐	☐	☐	☑

Name of Principal: Dr. Joseph Giammarella

Official School Name: High Tech High School

School Mailing Address: 2000 85th Street
North Bergen, NJ 07047-4715

County: Hudson State School Code Number*: 17-2295-050

Telephone: (201) 662-6801 E-mail: jgiammar@hcstonline.org

Fax: (201) 854-2149 Web site/URL: http://www.hcstonline.org/

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that all information is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*: Mr. Frank Gargiulo Superintendent e-mail: fgargiul@hcstonline.org

District Name: Hudson County Schools of Technology District Phone: (201) 662-6704

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mr. Craig Guy

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

**Non-Public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*
The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Director, National Blue Ribbon Schools (Aba.Kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, National Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)

2. The school has made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) or its equivalent each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.

3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's AYP requirement or its equivalent in the 2012-2013 school year. Meeting AYP or its equivalent must be certified by the state. Any AYP status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.

4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take foreign language courses.

5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2007 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for that period.

6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 or 2012.

7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.

8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.

9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.

10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.

11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district
   - 0 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
   - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
   - 7 High schools
   - 0 K-12 schools
   - 8 Total schools in district

2. District per-pupil expenditure: 14154

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Urban or large central city

4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 4

5. Number of students as of October 1, 2012 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	60	102	162
10	64	96	160
11	64	95	159
12	74	79	153
Total in Applying School:			634

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

0 %	American Indian or Alaska Native
19 %	Asian
8 %	Black or African American
37 %	Hispanic or Latino
1 %	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
35 %	White
0 %	Two or more races
100 %	Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2011-2012 school year: 3%

This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Step	Description	Value
(1)	Number of students who transferred ***to*** the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	1
(2)	Number of students who transferred ***from*** the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	21
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	22
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2011	634
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.03
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	3

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 0%

Total number of ELL students in the school: 0

Number of non-English languages represented: 0

Specify non-English languages:

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 39%

Total number of students who qualify: 247

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 3%

Total number of students served: 19

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

3	Autism	0	Orthopedic Impairment
0	Deafness	3	Other Health Impaired
0	Deaf-Blindness	11	Specific Learning Disability
0	Emotional Disturbance	0	Speech or Language Impairment
0	Hearing Impairment	0	Traumatic Brain Injury
0	Mental Retardation	1	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
1	Multiple Disabilities	0	Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Full-Time	**Part-Time**
Administrator(s)	2	1
Classroom teachers	59	1
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	3	0
Paraprofessionals	0	0
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	17	17
Total number	81	19

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1: 11:1

13. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Daily student attendance	95%	95%	95%	95%	94%
High school graduation rate	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

14. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools):**
Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2012.

Graduating class size:	142
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	98%
Enrolled in a community college	1%
Enrolled in vocational training	%
Found employment	%
Military service	%
Other	1%
Total	**100**%

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award:

☉ No

○ Yes

If yes, what was the year of the award?

PART III - SUMMARY

The entrance to High Tech High School is lined with awards and news stories, images of success and student artwork. From the moment one steps inside, it is clear that this is a school of reputation and success. Each morning, students from every corner of Hudson County pass these awards on their way to a vast common area where teachers and students are hard at work. The common area clears at the tone of the first bell, and the student body en masse—consisting of 64.7% minority students, largely from homes where English is not the primary spoken language—makes its way to one of four comprehensive vocational programs. This is vocation the High Tech way: Architecture & Design (AACT), Performing Arts, Science Lab Technologies, and Technology & Visual Arts make up the core of the school. Our mission states that we are a dynamic and nurturing community of learners that empowers students to reach their individual potential by providing a creative atmosphere for innovative learning and academic excellence. We accomplish this through intensive vocational and academic training. It is our vision to create a community of diverse learners who develop their potential through critical thinking. We foster the expression of each student's individuality while delivering a structured curriculum adapted to meet the needs of 21st century learners and citizens.

According to the 2010 United States Census, Hudson County, part of the New York Metropolitan Area, is the sixth most densely populated county in the United States. Hudson County is made up of the following municipalities: Bayonne, Jersey City, Hoboken, Union City, West New York, Guttenberg, Secaucus, Kearny, Harrison, East Newark, North Bergen, and Weehawken. The population consists of 634,266 people, 246,437 households, and 148,355 families residing in the county. The racial makeup of the county is 54.05% (342,792) White, 13.23% (83,925) Black or African American, 0.64% (4,081) Native American, 13.39% (84,924) Asian, 0.05% (344) Pacific Islander, 14.25% (90,373) from other races, and 4.39% (27,827) from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race is 42.23% (267,853) of the population. 58.5% speak a language other than English at home. As far as educational attainment, 10.2 % have not attempted high school, 8.6% do not have a high school diploma, 26.7% have graduated high school, 15% have some college, 4.2% have an Associate's Degree, 22.7% have a Bachelor's Degree, and 12.6% have a Graduate Degree or higher. Using census data, students are initially selected to reflect the population of each municipality as well as the racial/ethnic composition of Hudson County.

Admission to High Tech High School is contingent upon Hudson County residency. All applications must be submitted by December 1st to be considered for the following school year. The application is filled out by the parent and student and then submitted to the grammar school guidance counselor for inclusion of school data. Prior to December 1st, the grammar school guidance counselor forwards all completed applications to High Tech High School. The Admission Review Committee (ARC), a school-based committee comprised of counselors, teachers, and administrators, performs a comprehensive evaluation based upon the student's transcripts, standardized test scores, grades, work skills, attendance, talents, auditions and interviews. Students are notified of acceptance or non-acceptance by mid-February.

Incoming freshmen are required to take a placement test administered by the school during the application process. Based upon the results of this placement exam, and in conjunction with the courses taken in grammar school, students create their schedules with their guidance counselors. To fulfill the core course requirements, a minimum of three years is necessary for Social Studies, Science and Math. Four years is mandatory for both English and Physical Education; two years of Language is also required. Students must participate in a vocational program of their choice throughout their four years as well elective classes.

High Tech High School is a place of pride and accomplishment. Our students and staff understand that what goes on within these walls is a microcosm of the world at large. Everyone works towards improvement. Students work closely with educators who are consummate professionals in their fields.

This goes for both academic and vocational instructors; our English and Science teachers are award winners in their respective fields, active members of academia and their respective art.

The great tradition of High Tech High School is mutual respect. Students are treated as young professionals who are teeming with potential. “Yes” is the preferred answer from teachers and administrators at High Tech. Hence, there is a host of community events and productions that make High Tech unique and draws the best students from Hudson County. For instance, our school claims its own Black Box Theater where elaborate musical productions are staged; the Gardens at High Tech support the student’s desire to develop a sense of urban agriculture; even our biennial Comic Convention aids in the trust and community-building that makes our school a success. The mutually respectful environment of High Tech builds interpersonal skills and teaches tolerance while also challenging students academically.

The end of the school day is not the end of the learning day at High Tech. LEAP classes, where students can earn high school or college credits, are offered after school. These classes demonstrate the needs and desires of our students and instructors. With classes from Intro to Psychology, taught by local professors for college credit, to French Cinema and Judo and Musical Theater, we aim to satisfy the diverse interests of our accomplished student body.

The moniker High Tech is not for show, either: with a 1 to 1.25 computer ratio and 100% internet connectivity, we are on the cutting edge of technology. Many of our academic instructors enjoy the use of SmartBoard technology. Our vocational teachers utilize the latest in their fields, including a 3-D printer and professional grade vocational software such as 3-DS Max and Final Cut Pro. We are also progressive about our technology, and recently institute a Bring-Your-Own Device program, where students are offered Wi-Fi for their personal devices to be used in school.

High Tech High School has all the makings of a Blue Ribbon School. U.S. News & World Report recently cited High Tech as one of the best high schools in the nation with a ranking of 508 out of 21,776 in the United States and placed 30th in New Jersey. On state-exit and other college-level exams, 99 percent of High Tech students proved proficient in English and 96 percent proved proficient in Math. Our full-time staff of 81 teachers and support staff and student body of 634 students all work to make our school a place of respect and reputation. The effectiveness of our program is evidenced by the following statistics: our drop-out rate is 0% and 98% percent of our students attend 4 year colleges, with 2 % attending two year colleges or technical programs. We have worked to make High Tech High School a school worthy of national acclaim.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

A. The primary standardized assessment at High Tech is the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA). This standard-based graduation test is taken for the first time by eleventh-grade students in March of their junior year. Students must score a minimum of 200 on both the mathematics and English sections of the test. Between 250 and 300 is considered advanced proficient.

The science component of the HSPA was eliminated in March 2008, so in an effort to raise academic science standards and achievement levels, the NJBCT was developed and replaced the HSPA science test. Three proficiency levels are used for categorizing performance on the HSPA and NJBCT: 1.) Partially Proficient, 2.) Proficient, and 3.) Advanced Proficient. Students scoring at the Partially Proficient level are considered to be below the state minimum level of proficiency. Students scoring at the Proficient and/or Advanced Proficient level are considered to be at or above the state and school level of proficiency.

At High Tech High School, we expect most of our students to pass and close to 40% to be advanced proficient.

B. In analyzing results from 2011-2012, only 92.3% of students passed the math HSPA in 2011 while 96% passed in 2012. However, while in 2011 45.8% were advanced proficient in 2011, only 38.3% were advanced proficient in 2012. 46.5% were proficient in 2011 while there was an increase in 2012 and 57.7% were proficient. In 2011 7.7% were not proficient, or were what we call partially proficient, and in 2012 only 4% were proficient. Although we did better overall in proficiency, we went down in the area of advanced proficient. This tells me that our remediation programs are successful but we need to focus on student improvement through the use of personalized learning plans in order to move students from proficient to advanced proficient.

We traditionally have 100% of our students pass the LAL HSPA. However, last year we had one student who did not pass. As a result we went from 100% passing in 2011 to only 99.3% in 2012. This student did wind up passing the LAL HSPA when it was given this past October. This serves as evidence that our remediation for this student was successful. In 2011 43% of our students were proficient but in 2012 only 35.1%. However, in 2011 only 57% of our students were proficient whereas in 2012 64.2% were. This LAL and math trends are very similar in that we did better overall but there was a decrease in advanced proficiency.

2. Using Assessment Results:

High Tech establishes and maintains a general testing program to improve the instructional program to assist students in achieving the Core Curriculum Content Standards as well as the Common Core State Standards. The purpose of testing is to measure the needs and progress of individuals, measure the achievement of grade levels, allow comparison of district pupils with national and other norms, and aid in evaluation of our various programs.

Upon completion of all Statewide Assessments, Individual Student Reports (ISRs) are utilized to identify student weaknesses. Student results are grouped by class/teacher to determine if there are any gaps in curriculum. The scope and sequence is analyzed to verify if all standards assessed are part of classroom instruction prior to testing. Students who do not meet minimal proficiency levels are enrolled in additional instructional time, either during the school day or after school, in order to address individual weakness. Additional instructional sessions are limited to a maximum of five students in order to maintain an individual atmosphere. Once these procedures are completed, parental meetings take place

with administrators and guidance counselors. At these meetings there is a discussion about why a student is selected and how the student will benefit from the additional instruction.

Students who perform below acceptable levels on statewide assessments of the Core Curriculum Content Standards participate in remedial programs. Proficiency is also be evaluated through multi-skills assessment, standardized tests, diagnostic instruments, teacher observations and pupil progress reports.

These programs include procedures to evaluate student achievement related to the remedial program's objectives and standards. Continuous communication among teaching staff members and parents/guardians of students participating in remedial educational programs is be coordinated by the principal. These programs are supplemental to the regular program and designed to assist students who have academic, social, economic or environmental needs that prevent them from succeeding.

All parents/guardians are notified in writing of a student's need for a remedial/skill maintenance program and are encouraged to participate in its design. Regulations governing these programs and procedures are reviewed and adopted by the Board as required by law. The superintendent and principal evaluate the remedial education programs each school year and report to the Board as to their effectiveness in achieving and maintaining acceptable levels of student proficiency.

The principal, in consultation with teaching staff, develops criteria for evaluation, indicators of achievement of the criteria, and acceptable standards of achievement for all grade levels, courses and programs offered by the school. The criteria, indicators and standards must be related to school's goals and objectives. Parents/guardians are informed in a timely manner whenever their child appears in danger of failing to meet required proficiency levels. Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to participate in designing remedial plans for their children.

These standards of proficiency include but are not limited to the Core Curriculum Content Standards identified by the NJ State Department of Education and form the basis for the school's grading system. The specific indicators of achievement and standards of proficiency developed for all courses and programs accepted for credit toward high school graduation are given to students and parents/guardians, in writing, at the time the students are admitted.

By the date required by law, the superintendent annually reports to the Board and the community, at a regularly scheduled meeting, an evaluation of student achievement toward meeting district and school goals and objectives. Low student achievement is regarded by the Board as an indication that revisions are needed in educational programming, general strategy, staff resource use, staff evaluation, and/or other aspects of the learning program.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Sharing successful strategies or best practices are accomplished in a number of ways. Our strategies are regularly shared throughout Hudson County, and we have also participated in state- and national-level associations. Collaboration is a core value we extend to our students, and, just like the notion of lifelong learning, the instructors and administrators at High Tech practice what they preach.

On the local level, we participate in the Hudson County Curriculum Consortium which conducts meetings twice per month to address updates and revisions of subject area core standards. Here, instructors from schools across Hudson County exchange ideas and methodologies in order to improve content delivery to all students. These meetings have been mutually beneficial for all districts involved.

At the district level, monthly department meetings are held with members of each department. These meetings are reinforced by Liaison Meetings, wherein the Liaison for each department meets to discuss strategies and methods that might work on an interdisciplinary level. The results of these meetings will often trigger work that culminates in our Knowledge Sharing Day, where groups of educators present to

one another on a variety of methods to materials. As the Core Curriculum Content Standards have been adopted at High Tech, these local meetings are essential to maintaining our standards.

Our educators and administrators regularly participate in state- and nation-wide collaborative initiatives. For instance, our Academy of Architecture and Contemporary Themes (AACT) sent several instructors to participate and present at the Coalition of Essential Schools Conference in Rhode Island in 2009. At this conference, which is aimed at progressive and typically small schools that echo the nature of AACT, the instructors presented their methodologies for crafting project-oriented, academically rigorous work that left room for student input and collaboration. In addition to their presentation, the AACT instructors participated in a smattering of presentations from other educators around the United States, covering topics that ranged from Visual Literacy to classroom management.

This year at High Tech's Knowledge Sharing Day, we are hosting a conference similar to the ubiquitous TED Conferences. Other schools in our district will be provided with a list of various talks, and from this list they will choose topics that interest them and attend the presentations accordingly. For instance, one of our English teachers who makes extensive use of social media in his classroom will discuss the advantages of using Twitter to make students accountable and improve students' success. The teachers in AACT, our Architecture & Design Academy, each have a WordPress blog that their students follow. Their presentation will focus on a modified flipped classroom and the benefits of utilizing the web as a hub for discussion and community-building outside the school walls. In performing arts, a blanket term for vocations ranging from Audio Technology to Dance, the instructors are using their collaborative efforts to make a greater statement about collaboration. For example, in one project the Audio Tech students created a minute-long music piece to which their partner, a dance student, had to choreograph a piece of movement. Using this as a basis for discussion and analysis, the Performing Arts teachers' presentation will focus on the importance on collaboration within the arts.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

Parents are an integral part of High Tech High School's community of learners. Their participation is crucial to the completion of our students' application process and their attendance at the interview for incoming students is essential. During this interview, parents sign the High Tech High School Compact, which is a document that sets forth the responsibilities of the school, parent and student.

We have semi-annual parent teacher conferences, but our PTO (Parent Teacher Organization) meets monthly. The High Tech PTO keeps parents actively involved with current programs and activities and helps develop new programs and activities. The PTO is also largely involved in fundraising and networking. In the spring, we have a Parent/Teacher Social, and in the fall the sophomore parents have a Welcome Back BBQ for the freshmen and their families. Our Performing Arts Program also benefits from extraordinary parental involvement. Parents and other members of the community can be found at all hours of the day assisting with costumes, set design, sound checks, and transportation.

As recipients of Carl Perkins funding, High Tech maintains strong ties to the community. Each vocation has an Advisory Committee that is comprised of parents, students, teachers, and members of the community who work in relevant fields. There is a minimum of three meetings required per year. At the first meeting, the career cluster's technical skills assessment is approved. This drives the delivery of instruction and the parents, community members, and experts in the field choose a test that ensures our students are job ready for that particular industry. At the second meeting, the committee makes upgrades in curriculum and discusses industry/career standards. There is also discussion about how Carl Perkins funding should be used for that particular career cluster for the following year. At the thirst meeting, curriculum for the following school year is approved. All of our programs are required to have their "completion test" certified by members of the community who are actively engaged in the field. This process ensures that our instruction is relevant and our curriculum meets the needs of the industry. If students receive a high enough grade on this completion test, they may receive college credits. The State of NJ approves all NOCTI assessments, which is why most of our CTE teachers choose these

assessments. NOCTI provides high-quality technical assessments for secondary and post-secondary institutions. These NOCTI performance assessments allow students to demonstrate their skills by completing jobs using the actual equipment used in the occupation. For example, one of our majors here at High Tech is CADA (Computer-Assisted Design and Animation). This major, in the Technology & Visual Arts Academy, prepares students in design and engineering. Two of the computer programs essential to the major are AutoCad and 3DMax. The NOCTI assessment requires the students to demonstrate their level of competence using these programs.

High Tech also embraces the State Board of Education's School to Career philosophy. This program requires substantial involvement with the community. Many of our internships take place, for upperclassmen, outside of the building during school hours. These internships are in a field related to the students' majors. Students have worked in doctors' offices, research labs, architecture firms, governmental offices, and radio and television stations. These internships prepare our students for the real world.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

In order to maintain academic excellence, the core academic curricular is aligned to the NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards is science, social studies, visual and performing arts, health and physical education, technology and world languages. Because High Tech is a vocational school, all students select a major prior to their freshman year. Majors are organized into four broad areas that include Science, Technology & Visual Arts, Architecture & Design, and Performing Arts. All majors are project-based with opportunities for portfolio development. Each major is a four year articulated program that culminates with a certificate upon completion. Related internships are also available.

All High Tech students are required to take a minimum of three lab sciences. Our lab sciences include Earth & Space Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Environmental Science, A.P. Biology, A.p. Chemistry, A.P. Physics, and A.P. Environmental. Students also participate in many science electives and research opportunities, including Organic Chemistry, Biotechnology, Archeology, and Young Science Achievers (YSAP) research competitions.

High Tech students are required to take Global History, US History I, and US History II, as per NJ State requirements. They are also encouraged to take electives and AP courses such as AP Economics, AP European History, AP Human Geography, AP Government & Politics, Current Events and Law.

We have an extensive visual and performing arts program, including Dance, Music & Audio Technology, Musical Theatre, Theatre Arts and Studio Arts. Performing Arts Academy Majors typically take these vocational courses all four years, although there are opportunities for non-performing arts majors to take electives or double major.

The goals of High Tech's Physical Education Program are designed to address and fulfill the NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards. During their four years of participation in the physical education program students will develop self-esteem and confidence, learn the benefits of teamwork and sportsmanship, develop cardiovascular fitness to meet the demands of daily life, and improve body strength, range of motion, and flexibility.

Students are required to take two years of the same World Language, Spanish, Spanish for Native Speakers, Japanese, or French, but often take three or four years of their preferred language. Our students travel abroad regularly and receive Study Abroad credits. Educational trips have been taken to Japan, Italy, France, Spain, and Greece to name a few. Students prepare projects based on these experiences when they return.

As a vocational high school, High Tech offers several technology electives and majors. Students can choose from Web Design, Audio Technology, Television Production, Graphic Design, Business Technology, and Automotive Technology. All of our classes have a strong emphasis on technology; software programs are utilized to generate exceptional academic work. Depending on course selection, students graduate with a working knowledge of Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, AutoCAD, 3DMax, Revit, Flash HTML, ProTools, Final Cut Pro, and iMovie.

The English Language Arts and Mathematics curricula are aligned to the common core standards. All curricula is developed using graphic organizers. The following components are included in all areas: standards, communicative progress indicators, strands, essential questions, enduring understanding, activities, assessment, resources, equipment needed and 21st century skills and themes.

The Learning through Extended & Accelerated Programs (LEAP) is designed to provide our students here at High Tech High School with an additional opportunity to meet the high standards. These standards are expected of them with additional time, effort, and greater challenges as they work to accelerate and develop the skills necessary for the citizen of the 21st century. The philosophy of the "needs more time" and "needs more challenges" reflects our goal and commitment to meet the needs of our students in an ever-changing global community.

At High Tech High School, we believe that the curriculum is a road map to assisting students toward a successful future. Curriculum should be student-centered, adaptable, and flexible enough to meet the needs of a diverse population. Curriculum should also encourage individuals to be lifelong learners. High Tech High School is known for its student-responsive curriculum. Students, as well as teachers, can propose courses and/or independent studies and recruit enrollment. In response we have implemented such courses as Forensics, Biotechnology, French Theatre, Instrumental Jazz, Portfolio Development, Urban Agriculture, and Hip Hop Literature, to name a few. Students have also advocated for and achieved additional intramural and extra-curricular activities through this mechanism. Our vision for curriculum is that it meets the needs of society by empowering active learners, thus creating innovative, integrated and meaningful experiences in a modern, state-of-the-art facility.

2. Reading/English:

At High Tech High School, we recognize that storytelling is the key to humanity. We strive to teach our students the significance and mechanics of storytelling so that they can carry these skills with them into whatever futures they pursue. Through prose and poetry, our students learn to understand that our world is simultaneously vast and intricate and our experiences can be universally understood.

The High Tech High School English Department has doggedly mapped out a very particular road for our students to travel, so that, by exploring author's craft on a yearly basis, they draw insightful conclusions about the human condition and, thus, their relationship to the universal truths inherent in the human condition. Students explore and analyze a diverse range of fiction and non-fiction, from the Grand Guignol of Shakespeare's tragedies to current news media, from Sophocles' Oedipus to Martel's Pi, from the political cartoons of Trudeau to the great American novels of this new century.

With courses recently aligned to meet the CCELA standards, every one of our classes--whether World, American, or European Literature or Literary Masterpieces--demands and emphasizes critical reading and thinking alongside expository and persuasive writing. Students are exposed to learning methods as diverse as student-centered projects, extensive research essays, and Socratic discussion.

High Tech offers Advanced Placement classes where the lens of learning is focused further, and students are pushed to understand in-depth nuances of a text. Advanced Placement students are expected to work at the level of an undergraduate. Through articulate discussions and in-depth lectures, our students have continually found success in the AP Language Arts classroom.

While the vast majority of our students are reading at or above national levels, we especially attend to those students who lag behind. Peer-tutoring is an unintimidating, first-step for a struggling student to make a change. Beyond that, we offer non-punitive LEAP Remediation courses where students bring their struggles to an educator who can give detailed individual attention to the student. This two-step program has been essential in maintaining our high standards for both academic performance and state-level testing where we continually maintain proficiency.

3. Mathematics:

The Mathematics Department of High Tech begins with the knowledge that all students have different needs but each must be challenged to excel. As such, our curriculum is designed to provide a solid foundation that will allow for maximum growth. Each course from the preceding year is a prerequisite for

the current year's course. Such scaffolding allows for a steady mastery of core algebraic concepts that are essential for high-level mathematics later in a student's academic career and also allows us to accomplish our goals of satisfying student curiosity and maintaining proficiency on state and college-level exams.

We have a few different mathematics tracks for students based on their individual needs and their desire to accelerate. Freshmen who do not wish to accelerate take Algebra I freshmen year, Geometry sophomore year, Algebra II junior year, and Precalculus senior year. Freshmen who take Algebra in the 8th grade with a high school certified teacher take Geometry freshmen year, Algebra II sophomore year, Precalculus junior year and Calculus I or AP Calculus AB senior year. All students also have the option of accelerating though our LEAP program in the summer or after school. Freshmen could take Geometry during the day and Alg II after school, Precalculus as a sophomore, Calculus I as a junior, and AP Calculus AB or BC as a senior. We offer many options for our students so they can learn mathematics at a pace that suits their individual needs.

Many of our mathematics classrooms utilize a variety of technology to promote understanding and aid in presentation of materials. Smart Boards and tablets allow for easy clarification and in-depth looks at problem sets. In addition, specialized software such as Geometer's sketchpad, Derive, and a TI-83 emulator are all utilized with the goal of increasing scores and understanding.

Our classroom methods incorporate traditional lecture methods with more tech-savvy (as indicated above). Additionally, our instructors will include Socratic Seminars to help students get at the "big idea" behind a concept, thus appealing to a variety of learning aptitudes in the mathematics classroom.

Struggling students receive consistent and advanced attention. Integrate Mathematics courses are available at every level, where classes are smaller and student/teacher interactions are more concise. These classes also meet 6 times per week, as oppose to the usual 5 meetings per week. In addition to Integrated courses, we also offer non-punitive LEAP enrichment and remediation courses where students can meet one-on-one with a math instructor for direct and guided aid.

Consistent with our goal to increase student proficiency in mathematics, High Tech is continuously exploring supplemental aids to support the mathematics curriculum. High Tech acquired "ALEKS," an online instructional supplement to improve student performance for math skills in both the HSPA and the SAT. Also, a new web-based program application entitled "A+" was purchased to support math skills. The math department uses both based on preference and is continually evaluating both programs to determine effectiveness.

We continually examine our programs for strategies to improve student learning and impact scores. Ongoing curriculum committees meet to review new and emerging content and Common Core standard requirements. Consistent with the "Understanding by Design" model, the staff members participated in a countywide initiative to develop common web-enabled curriculum templates for mathematics.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Within High Tech High School is the Academy of Architecture and Contemporary Themes (AACT). The pioneer vocational academy of High Tech, AACT immerses students in a design-oriented community of learners. The academy strives to make education meaningful with a curriculum that aligns with the district, state, and federal standards. AACT utilizes a project-based, hybrid approach to education that delves deeper into concepts than most traditional methods of instruction. As a community, the Academy of Architecture and Contemporary Themes dedicates itself to making high school a rich and meaningful experience.

With architecture and design as the central focus, students learn to use materials, methods, and current technologies to solve design problems with originality, creativity, and thought. All students who enroll in AACT take architecture and design in their freshmen and sophomore years. There they will develop a

knowledge of architectural and design elements, visual problem solving and the process of creation. Through academic projects and in-depth seminars in their core content areas, the students and facilitators act as critical thinkers. Our learning community fosters creative expression of thought, curiosity about the world, and intellectual risk-taking.

To deliver core learning materials, Content Specialists (English, History, Science, Math, and Architecture) plan collaboratively to create standards-aligned, interdisciplinary projects and other academic assignments. From these plans come high-quality, academically rigorous project documents and artifacts that demonstrate the AACT student's ability to work on the collegiate level in the 21st Century. All facilitators meet daily for 45 minutes to collaborate and plan projects.

AACT represents a microcosm of High Tech. Students are provided with abundant technology and compassionate instructors who work tirelessly to promote their established virtues: applied learning through active engagement creates lifelong learners; choice enhances student interest; active learning leads to success; schools should provide an environment where students are empowered to explore; all students can become lifelong critical thinkers.

5. Instructional Methods:

As a result of its diverse population, High Tech High School modifies or adjusts individual instruction to ensure high levels of student learning and achievement. Each incoming student is tested in both Math and English/Language Arts to determine levels of proficiency and correct placement in academic classes.

When a student requires instruction modification, we are diligent about accommodations. For instance, the Algebra IA and Algebra 1B course curriculum permits the instructor to deliver the traditional Algebra I course content over a two-year period for students who demonstrate partial proficiency on the placement test. Students whose scores are only partially proficient on the Math test are given additional class time to insure high levels of student learning and achievement.

Technology is essential in ensuring that our students are learning at or above level. With a 1-to-1.25 computer ratio, students have easy access to the variety of digital resources across the internet. For students whose performance needs bolstering we have programs such as ALEKS and A+ which function as personalized tutors as these programs can be tailored to the needs of each student. These programs work in conjunction with our curriculum and instructors monitor student performance to provide feedback, clarification, and to boost needed links to classroom work.

Our school Media Center has a digital hub called the eLibrary, where students are provided with an array of learning tools that function at all levels of understanding. The eLibrary offers links to school-selected academic journals and search engines such as EBSCO Host which provide resources for students of all abilities and across all disciplines. Students can access these high-quality sources in a concentrated location from anywhere using their school log-in information.

Each classroom is furnished with a ceiling-mounted projector attached to an instructor's desktop. The proliferation of video and audio materials in the classroom guarantees that learners of all kinds will find success and that even the most difficult concepts can be illustrated. In our Academy of Architecture and Contemporary Themes, students and instructors use iPads, which offer applications such as iAnnotate that allow instructors to literally highlight a piece of a text before the class. In mathematics, iPads and Smart Boards are also utilized in some classrooms to reach students of all capabilities.

Students are also offered LEAP classes (Learning Through Extended and Accelerated Programs) for remediation and/or advanced academic standing. The following are examples of classes that are offered for advanced academic standing: Algebra II, Precalculus, AP Economics, SAT Prep, and Biotechnology. Remediation classes are also available in all academic areas to assist students achieve proficiency on the NJCCCS and CCS.

6. Professional Development:

At HTHS, we have a professional development committee that is focused on considering the available evidence from research and practice on the promising means of improving student achievement. Each year we ask the instructional professionals to reflect on their practice, to self-assess their effectiveness focused on student learning gaps and to collectively study in a social context what they consider to be areas in need of attention. We call this process "Action Research." The staff assess needs, share information, and work collaboratively to plan, problem solve, and improve learning opportunities. They share current practices and literature to focus instructional strategies on student needs and use their data to make decisions about their teaching. Common planning time within the regular workday is provided. In addition to their regular prep time, the staff is given two hours per month to collaborate on their action research project.

Many of the action research projects emphasize methodology and assessment and strategies that are applied directly in the classroom. For example, the architecture & design academy proposal sought to prove that using iPads in the classroom would increase student achievement and engagement. After writing a grant and being awarded the monies to purchase iPads for all freshmen and sophomores in the architecture & design program, the teachers attended professional development workshops by Apple educators all summer before implementing their action research plan. They collected data all year, interviewed students and teachers, and presented their findings at our district's annual Knowledge Sharing Day—our district-wide presentation of teacher findings.

In addition to our Action Research projects and Knowledge Sharing Day, teachers are always encouraged to take advantage of professional development opportunities. The district agrees to pay for reasonably priced workshops that will have a direct benefit in the classroom. For example, this autumn we had three humanities teachers attend a workshop at Bard College's Institute for Writing and Thinking seminars. One of them, an English teacher, attended a workshop on Jonathan Swift and Satire. When she returned, her lesson was used for an observation where she demonstrated not only a proficiency in the new material but also represented for the students how new knowledge is always a worthy pursuit. We encourage our students to be lifelong learners; what better way for our teachers to model this?

7. School Leadership:

At High Tech High School, we have a deep belief in site-based management and shared decision-making. The principal and assistant principal work collaboratively in all aspects of the administrators' tasks. Our school population is currently comprised of 634 students. We have a principal, an assistant principal, four guidance counselors, two school psychologists, and a liaison for each department- English, social studies, physical education, world language, performing arts, science, mathematics, technology & visual arts, and architecture & design. The principal and assistant principal perceive their jobs as supporting and facilitating teachers and students.

An integral philosophy at HTHS has always been that it is everyone's job to keep the school safe, clean, and conducive to learning. We have no duty assignments for teachers, but all members of our community are expected to be vigilant in these areas and in doing so, teachers have extra time in their school day to address their educational priorities.

Both the principal and assistant principal have department liaison meetings monthly, staff meetings monthly, and sit in on department meetings to review curriculum, policies, and programs. We have an open-door policy at all times. All administrators and counselors are expected to have their doors open and are always available to meet. It is not necessary to schedule appointments. Lesson plans are reviewed and returned with feedback on a weekly or monthly basis, meetings with teachers are held to analyze PSAT and HSPA results, and plans are made with instructors to improve student achievement.

High Tech administrators model the ideals of the High Tech community. They develop appropriate relationships with staff and students, use assessment as a meaningful tool, promote quality state-of-the-art results, work well with parents, follow and enforce community expectations, and are reflective practitioners. High Tech administrators lead by example by continually participating in professional development opportunities and embracing the concept of lifelong learning.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 11 Test: NJ HSPA

Edition/Publication Year: 2007 Publisher: Measurement Inc.

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Advanced + Proficient	96	92	96	94	96
Advanced	38	46	41	50	33
Number of students tested	151	142	147	126	120
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Advanced + Proficient	93	93	94	91	
Advanced	36	39	38	51	
Number of students tested	60	61	53	35	
2. African American Students					
Advanced + Proficient	89	71	100		93
Advanced	6	29			27
Number of students tested	18	14	14		15
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Advanced + Proficient	96	94	95	93	93
Advanced	41	45	44	38	37
Number of students tested	55	53	62	40	45
4. Special Education Students					
Advanced + Proficient					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Advanced + Proficient					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian					
Advanced + Proficient	100	88	100	100	100
Advanced	43	42	48	87	60
Number of students tested	28	24	23	15	25
NOTES:					

13NJ10

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 11 Test: NJ HSPA

Edition/Publication Year: 2007 Publisher: Measurement Inc.

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Advanced + Proficient	99	100	99	100	100
Advanced	38	43	41	28	33
Number of students tested	151	142	147	126	119
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Advanced + Proficient	98	100	96	100	
Advanced	35	38	28	26	
Number of students tested	60	61	53	35	
2. African American Students					
Advanced + Proficient	100	100	100		100
Advanced	22	29	14		27
Number of students tested	18	14	14		15
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Advanced + Proficient	100	100	98	100	100
Advanced	26	43	39	20	29
Number of students tested	55	53	62	45	45
4. Special Education Students					
Advanced + Proficient					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Advanced + Proficient					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian					
Advanced + Proficient	100	100	100	100	100
Advanced	50	50	48	47	28
Number of students tested	28	24	23	15	25
NOTES:					

13NJ10

20